the India-China Joint Working Group (JWG) the two sides continued discussions aimed at arriving at a fair, reasonable and mutually acceptable settlement of the India-China boundary question. They also held discussions on the implementation of the Agreement on the Maintenance of Peace and Tranquility along the Line of Actual Control in the India-China Border Areas, which was signed during Prime Minister's visit to China on September 7, 1993.

During the discussions the two sides noted with satisfaction that the situation along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) was peaceful and that confidence building measures already in place were working well. The two sides exchanged views on further confidence building measures and agreed in principle that additional points for meetings between the border personnel of the two countries will be established. Specific details regarding these additional points will be worked out in the India-China Expert Group. The two sides also took note of the considerable progress made at the first two sessions of the Expert Group. They noted that the Expert Group had reached agreement on its work regulations. The leaders of the two delegations directed the Expert Group to continue to adopt a positive and constructive approach in its future work.

The two sides also took this opportunity to exchange views on all aspects of India-China relations. Both sides expressed happing at the steady and perceptible improvement in bilateral ties and expanding cooperation between the two countries. They reiterated their commitment to maintain this positive trend. The two sides expressed satisfaction at the finalisation of the Agreement on avoidance of double taxation. Agreements on banking relations and cooperation in the area of health and medicines are also being finalised. The two sides also noted with satisfaction the opening of Shipkila route in Himachal Pradesh for border trade and agreed to carry out a joint study for improving the existing facilities and opening additional routes for Kailash Manasarovar Pilgrimage.

Views were also exchanged on regional and global issue of mutual interest. There was a convergence of positions on several international topics.

US Document on Kashmir

173. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK:
SHRI G. Y. KRISHNAN:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item captioned "US Documents sees 'Jihad' links in J.K." appearing in the Hindustan Times, New Delhi dated June 29, 1994.

(b) if so, what are the facts thereof;

(c) what is the reaction of Government thereto; and

(d) what steps have been taken or proposed to be taken to counternance Pakistan's reported perfidy in Kashmir and the potentially dangerous ramifications arising therefrom?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) A report entitled "The Kashmir Connection" prepared by the Task Force on Terrorism and Unconventional Warfare, of the House Republican Research Committee, US House of Representatives documents Pakistan's role in international terrorism and its profound ramifications for India. This non-official report states that supporters of Islamist causes, put Kashmir high on their list of Jihads to be fought. Republican Congressman, Bill McCollum while focusing

attention on Pakistan's role in aiding and abetting terrorism in Kashmir introduced the report into the US Congressional record on June 22, 1994.

(c) Government have consistently maintained that Pakistan's support to terrorism and subversion directed against India is continuing. Pakistan has been training Kashmiri militants, providing them with arms and financial support and actively assisting them to infiltrate across the LOC into J & K. Government have and will continue to apprise the international community of the support being extended by Pakistan to subversion and terrorism directed against India.

(d) Government have intensified surveillance and patrolling along the border/LOC to prevent infiltration. Government remain vigilant about activities detrimental to national security and take all measures to safeguard it.

Indo-Pak relations

174. SHRI SARADA MOHANTY: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the various factors responsible for the deteriorating Indo-Pak relations;

(b) whether Government have taken any steps to improve Indo-Pak relations;

(c) if so, the steps taken in that regard during the last six months; and

(d) the result thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI R. L. BHATIA): (a) Pakistan's continued support to subversion and terrorism against India, its concerted campaign to internationalise Kashmir issue and its hostile propaganda directed against India in violation of the Simla Agreement cause tensions and impede good neighbourly relations between the two countries. The incidents of harassment of Indian diplomats based in Islamabad and Karachi have further vitiated the atmosphere of bilateral relations. The restrictive visa regime for Indian nationals adopted by Pakistan has adversely affected people-to-people contacts between India and Pakistan.

(b) to (d) Government are committed to resolve all differences with Pakistan peacefully and through bilateral negotiations within the framework of the Simla Agreement.

Pursuant to the Seventh round of India-Pakistan Foreign Secretary level talks at Islamabad from 1-3 January, 1994, Government forwarded to Pakistan on 24 January, 1994 six Non-Papers containing specific and constructive suggestions on Siachen, Sir Creek agreement on maintenance of peace and tranquility along the LOC, Tulbal Navigation Project, additional Confidence Building Measures and India-Pakistan Joint Commission.

On March 21, 1994 Government once again urged Pakistan to consider the Indian proposals with sincerity of purpose as they could form the basis of a comprehensive and meaningful dialogue and suggested that the Eighth Round of Foreign Secretary level talks may be resumed either in New Delhi or in Islamabad. Pakistan's response is awaited.

Indo-Russian Agreement on debt settlement

175. DR. MURLI MANOHAR JOSHI:
SHRI TRILOKI NATH CHATURVEDI:

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) the important points discussed with Russian Government during